

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A beverage filter cartridge comprising:
 - a container having a container bottom and a container side wall extending upwardly from said container bottom to a top opening;
 - a filter element having a filter bottom and a filter side wall extending upwardly from said filter bottom, said filter element being received in said container and directly joined at a peripheral juncture to the interior of said container side wall, the interior of said container thus being subdivided by said filter element into a first chamber accessible via said top opening, and a second chamber, wherein pleats or flutes in said filter side wall form exit channels leading to said second chamber, and said exit channels are located between said container side wall and said filter side wall;
 - a beverage medium received in said first chamber via said top opening; and
 - a cover closing said top opening, said cover being piercable to admit liquid into said first chamber for contact with said beverage medium to produce a beverage, said filter element being permeable to accommodate the flow therethrough of said beverage for delivery via said exit channels to said second chamber, and said container bottom being piercable to accommodate an outflow of said beverage from said cartridge.
2. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein said container and filter bottom are substantially parallel.
3. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein said exit channels are defined only by flutes in said filter side wall.
4. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein said exit channels are defined only by pleats in said filter side wall.

5. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein said filter side wall extends downwardly from said peripheral juncture and away from said container side wall at an angle of less than about 1 degree.

6. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 5 wherein said angle is between about 0.50 to 0.90 degrees.

7. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein a height of said first chamber measured between said filter bottom and said cover is between about 75 to 80% of a height of an interior of said cartridge as measured between said container bottom and said cover.

8. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein said exit channels increase in width from a minimum adjacent said peripheral juncture to a maximum adjacent said filter bottom.

9. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1 wherein a permeability of a lower region of said filter element is reduced in comparison to a permeability of an upper region thereof.

10. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 9 wherein said reduced permeability is achieved by increasing a thickness of said filter element in said lower region.

11. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 10 wherein said increased thickness is achieved by lining the lower region of said filter element with an insert.

12. (Currently amended) A beverage filter cartridge comprising:
a container having a side wall and a bottom;
a filter element having a side wall and a bottom, said filter element being arranged to subdivide the interior of said container into a first chamber inside said filter element and a second

chamber located outside said filter element, said filter element being directly joined to the interior of the container side wall at a peripheral juncture, and said filter sidewall having corrugations, having at least a portion that is permeable, and being arranged so that at least a portion of said filter side wall is spaced inwardly from and out of contact with said container side wall; and
a cover enclosing at least a portion of the first chamber.

13. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said container and filter bottoms are substantially parallel.

14. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said corrugations form exit channels in said filter side wall.

15. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said filter side wall extends downwardly from said peripheral juncture and away from said container side wall at an angle of less than about 1 degree.

16. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 15, wherein said angle is between about 0.50 to 0.90 degrees.

17. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein a height of said first chamber measured between said filter bottom and said cover is between about 75 to 80% of a height of an interior of said cartridge as measured between said container bottom and said cover.

18. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said corrugations increase in width from a minimum adjacent said peripheral juncture to a maximum adjacent said filter bottom.

19. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein a permeability of a lower region of said filter element is reduced in comparison to a permeability of an upper region thereof.

20. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 19 wherein said reduced permeability is achieved by increasing a thickness of said filter element in said lower region.

21. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 20 wherein said increased thickness is achieved by lining the lower region of said filter element with an insert.

22. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein a majority of the filter side wall is spaced inwardly from and out of contact with the container side wall.

23. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said container is impermeable and said cover is impermeable.

24. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said filter bottom is vertically spaced from the container bottom.

25. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said corrugations form exit channels located between said container side wall and said filter side wall.

26. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 25, wherein said exit channels lead downwardly to said second chamber.

27. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said container has a frustoconical shape.

28. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said container has a collar surrounding said top opening, and said cover is sealed to said collar.

29. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said filter element includes an upper rim, and said filter element is joined to the container at the upper rim.

30. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein the corrugations form channels for flow of liquid exiting from the first chamber at the filter side wall.

31. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said container and filter side walls coact to form channels for flow of liquid exiting from the first chamber.

32. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said corrugations are defined by flutes in said filter side wall.

33. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein said corrugations are defined by pleats in said filter side wall.

34. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, wherein the cover and the container are piercable when the cartridge is used to form a beverage.

35. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 12, in combination with a beverage forming system that is adapted to pierce the cover, inject heated liquid into the first chamber, and pierce the container to allow beverage to exit the second chamber.

36. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein a majority of the filter side wall is spaced inwardly from and out of contact with the container side wall.

37. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein said container is impermeable and said cover is impermeable.

38. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein said filter bottom is vertically spaced from the container bottom.

39. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein said container has a frustoconical shape.

40. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein said container has a collar surrounding said top opening, and said cover is sealed to said collar.

41. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein said filter element includes an upper rim, and said filter element is joined to the container at the upper rim.

42. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, wherein the cover and the container are piercable when the cartridge is used to form a beverage.

43. (Previously presented) The beverage filter cartridge of claim 1, in combination with a beverage forming system that is adapted to pierce the cover, inject heated liquid into the first chamber, and pierce the container to allow beverage to exit the second chamber.

44. (Currently amended) A beverage filter cartridge comprising:
a container having a side wall and a bottom;
a filter element having a side wall and a bottom, said filter element being arranged to subdivide the interior of said container into a first chamber inside said filter element and a second chamber located outside said filter element, said filter element being directly joined to the interior of the container side wall at a peripheral juncture, and said filter sidewall having corrugations and

being arranged so that at least a portion of said filter side wall is spaced inwardly from and out of contact with said container side wall; and

a cover enclosing at least a portion of the first chamber.